

NEWS ALERT



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Homeland Security Committee

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Chairman



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson

“One Year Later – Implementing the Biosurveillance Requirements of the 9/11 Act”

July 16, 2008 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity and Science and Technology Subcommittee hearing entitled “One Year Later – Implementing the Biosurveillance Requirements of the 9/11 Act”

“H.R. 1, the Implementing the Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act is the most important bill to come out of this committee.

It was a top priority of the Speaker and I am proud of the bipartisan work that this committee did to develop the bill and to get it passed into law.

As this subcommittee has noted through numerous hearings on the subject, the ability for early detection of a disease outbreak, whether naturally occurring or intentionally introduced, can lead to early response and outbreak control.

This is why we created NBIC and BioWatch.

However, we have concerns with these programs, which are both falling behind expected deployment deadlines and milestones for improvement.

I am also concerned with the continuity of the Office of Health Affairs. With the announced departure of Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs, Dr. Jeff Runge, the Department must ensure that critical vacancies are filled. I thank Dr. Runge for his service and hope that we work well with his Deputy, Dr. Jon Krohmer, who will take over in an Acting capacity.”

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